

## Original Paper

# Exploration of Business English Teaching Mode in Applied Undergraduate Colleges Based on OBE Concepts

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### Abstract

*In the context of globalization, the demand for business English professionals is increasing, placing the application-oriented undergraduate institutions under the critical responsibility of cultivating business English graduates with practical abilities and professional competencies. However, the traditional teaching model tends to prioritize the impartation of linguistic knowledge, neglecting the cultivation of actual application skills, which fails to meet market demands. The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) philosophy, which is guided by learning outcomes and emphasizes the development of students' abilities, offers new insights for educational reform. This article reviews the current state of research on business English teaching models in application-oriented undergraduate institutions, highlighting the shortcomings of traditional models. Based on the OBE concept, this article explores the reconstruction of training objectives, the optimization of curriculum systems, the reform of teaching methods, and the improvement of evaluation systems as four core elements, and proposes implementation strategies involving strengthening top-level design, faculty development, school-enterprise cooperation, and information technology construction. These measures not only enhance the quality of education but also boost students' competitiveness in the workplace, providing valuable references for the reform of business English teaching models in application-oriented undergraduate institutions.*

### Keywords

*OBE concept, Applied undergraduate, Business English, Teaching mode*

## 1. Introduction

The advent of the globalized era has rendered Business English an indispensable linguistic instrument across various industries. Applied undergraduate institutions, pivotal in nurturing practical professionals, shoulder the critical responsibility of cultivating Business English majors imbued with international perspectives and vocational competencies. Conventional teaching paradigms, however,

often prioritize the impartation of linguistic knowledge, neglecting the cultivation of practical skills and professional qualities, resulting in students struggling to acclimate swiftly to the demands of their roles upon entering the workforce. Confronted with this challenge, numerous educational scholars have embarked on exploring novel pedagogical models. The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) philosophy, characterized by its student-centric and competency-oriented approach, has gradually emerged as a significant direction in educational reform. The OBE philosophy underscores the orientation towards learning outcomes and emphasizes the cultivation of students' practical abilities, aligning profoundly with the talent development objectives of applied undergraduate institutions. This paper, grounded in the OBE philosophy, delves into the construction and implementation strategies of Business English teaching models within applied undergraduate institutions, aiming to offer insightful references for enhancing teaching quality and the overall caliber of students.

## **2. Research Status of Business English Teaching Mode in Applied Undergraduate Colleges and Universities**

Presently, the business English teaching models in applied undergraduate institutions are at a critical juncture of exploration and transformation. The traditional teaching approach often overemphasizes the imparting of linguistic knowledge while neglecting the cultivation of practical application abilities and professional competencies, resulting in students struggling to swiftly adapt to job requirements upon entering the workforce. Many institutions have recognized this issue but still face numerous challenges in implementing reforms. On one hand, the curriculum is relatively rigid, with a significant proportion of theoretical courses and insufficient practical components, leaving students with limited opportunities to engage in real-world work scenarios. On the other hand, teaching methods primarily rely on instructor-led lectures, with students passively absorbing knowledge, leading to low classroom interaction and participation, and stifling students' initiative and creativity in learning. Additionally, the evaluation system has its own set of issues. The current assessment methods predominantly focus on final exam scores, lacking adequate process-based evaluations, which fail to comprehensively reflect students' actual capabilities. This singular evaluation system not only restricts students' diverse development but also significantly diminishes the overall effectiveness of teaching. Although some institutions have begun experimenting with project-driven teaching and case-based teaching methods, the efficacy of these attempts has been uneven due to limitations in faculty resources and teaching materials, and they have yet to form a systematic model. Against this backdrop, the introduction of the OBE (Outcome-Based Education) philosophy undoubtedly offers a new pathway for business English teaching reform. OBE emphasizes a results-oriented approach, focusing on the cultivation of students' practical abilities, which aligns seamlessly with the talent development objectives of applied undergraduate institutions (Fangyuan, 2024).

### **3. Construction of Business English Teaching Mode in Applied Undergraduate Colleges Based on OBE Concepts**

#### *3.1 Reconstruction of Cultivation Objectives*

In the realm of redefining educational objectives, the pedagogical model for business English at application-oriented undergraduate institutions must be guided by occupational demands, thereby delineating precise and measurable learning outcomes. The crux of this concept hinges on the notion that education is no longer merely about imparting knowledge but ensuring that students possess the requisite competencies for actual work scenarios post-graduation. This necessitates educators and educational administrators to undertake in-depth investigations into the requisites of various industries, gaining insights into the specific demands enterprises place on business English professionals. For instance, enterprises may require adeptness in cross-cultural communication, business writing, interpreting, translating, and international business negotiation skills. These specific competencies form the bedrock upon which learning outcomes are crafted. For example, cross-cultural communication skills can be cultivated through classroom activities that simulate real-work environments, wherein students engage and collaborate across diverse cultural backgrounds. Business writing proficiencies can be enhanced through extensive case analyses and writing exercises, equipping students with the methodologies and techniques for composing various business documents. Interpreting and translating skills can be honed via various practical tasks, such as on-site translation during international conferences or translation of business contracts. International business negotiation capabilities can be sharpened through role-playing and simulated negotiations, enabling students to refine their negotiation techniques and adaptability within authentic negotiation settings. The establishment of these clear and measurable learning outcomes not only aids students in identifying their learning trajectories but also provides explicit directives for educators' instructional activities. Consequently, instructional activities are no longer isolated knowledge transfers but are intricately aligned with actual occupational requisites, fostering students' holistic proficiencies. For instance, educators can orchestrate student internships and simulated business projects, allowing students to apply their acquired knowledge and skills in practical work settings. Course curricula can be flexibly adjusted, incorporating more pragmatic course content based on corporate demands, such as international trade practices and international market strategies. These initiatives can significantly augment students' employability and adaptability, enabling them to swiftly integrate into the workforce post-graduation and contribute value to enterprises.

#### *3.2 Optimization of Curriculum System*

In the realm of curriculum system optimization, the pedagogical approach for Business English at applied undergraduate institutions should be driven by learning outcomes, incorporating modular and project-based curricula. This design paradigm better caters to the personalized needs of students, enhancing the efficacy and practicality of their studies. The modular curriculum allows students to curate their courses based on personal interests and career trajectories. For instance, students aspiring to

venture into international trade might explore modules such as International Trade Practices and Global Market Strategies, while those eyeing careers in international enterprises could delve into Intercultural Communication and International Business Negotiation. This flexible curricular structure not only stokes students' intellectual passions but also propels their academic motivation. Project-based courses, on the other hand, emphasize hands-on experience and collaborative teamwork, wherein students accrue invaluable skills and insights that textbooks alone cannot impart. An illustrative example might encompass a simulated international business negotiation project, where students negotiate roles within a team to conduct market research, strategize negotiation tactics, and engage in mock negotiations. Such activities fortify students' practical acumen and nurture their collaborative spirit and problem-solving prowess. Furthermore, project-based courses can be synergized with industry exigencies, inviting corporate experts to contribute to project design and mentorship, thus rendering students' education more aligned with real-world professional demands. For example, esteemed corporate executives could be invited to elucidate practical case studies from the domain of international business, fostering dynamic interactions with students. This robustly immersive curriculum not only elevates students' holistic competencies but also augments their employability, propelling the Business English education at applied undergraduate institutions towards refinement and internationalization. Each module and project must be meticulously aligned with students' prospective career trajectories to ensure a seamless transition into the professional sphere post-graduation (Cheng, 2024).

### *3.3 Reform of Teaching Methods*

Diversified teaching methods emphasize interaction and practicality. For instance, encouraging students to participate in classroom discussions and express their thoughts and opinions in English can be employed. Teachers may design open-ended questions to guide students' thinking and discussions, thereby enhancing their oral expression skills while fostering critical thinking and creativity. Role-playing is an exceptionally effective pedagogical approach, where students simulate real business scenarios, adopt different roles, and engage in cross-cultural communication and business negotiation. This method not only aids students in grasping the practical applications of business English but also facilitates the acquisition of essential communication skills pertinent to their future careers. Group collaborative projects are also highly beneficial, where students collaborate within teams to accomplish specific business tasks such as market research reports or business plans. Such cooperation not only hones students' teamwork abilities but also cultivates their project and time management skills. Teachers can further enrich their pedagogical content and format by utilizing multimedia and online resources. For example, incorporating video materials related to international business or employing online platforms for remote interactive learning can enhance classroom engagement and encourage student participation. Reforming teaching methods also necessitates consideration of students' individual needs, as different students possess distinct learning habits and interests. Teachers can tailor their teaching approaches and resources based on these individual characteristics. For example, for

students who enjoy reading, classic business English books and articles may be recommended, while for those inclined towards practical activities, more hands-on tasks and projects can be arranged. This personalized instruction not only improves learning outcomes but also adds more enjoyment and motivation to the learning process. Student-centered, diversified teaching methods are pivotal in the reform of business English education at applied undergraduate institutions, aiming to comprehensively enhance students' overall qualities and practical application abilities. The interaction and collaboration between teachers and students are crucial to this reform, necessitating teachers to elevate their pedagogical skills and continuously update their instructional philosophies, thereby providing students with richer and more practical learning experiences that prepare them for seamless adaptation and effective response to various challenges in the professional world (Wang, Li, Zhang, et al., 2024).

### *3.4 Improvement of Evaluation System*

In the realm of comprehensive evaluation systems, the pedagogical paradigms of business English instruction at applied undergraduate institutions should be centered on learning outcomes, constructing a diversified evaluation framework. This evaluation system should not only focus on students' mastery of knowledge but also place paramount importance on their practical application skills and comprehensive qualities. Traditional examination methods are no longer capable of fully reflecting students' learning achievements; hence, it is imperative to incorporate multiple assessment approaches. For instance, project-based assessments can be employed: upon the completion of specific business projects, evaluations are conducted jointly by educators and industry professionals. The evaluation encompasses not only the quality of project completion but also the students' teamwork abilities, communicative skills, innovative capabilities, and practical operational proficiencies, thereby providing a comprehensive and objective reflection of students' learning outcomes. Formative assessments also play a crucial role: every effort and advancement made by students during their learning process should be acknowledged and feedback provided. For example, teachers can offer instant evaluations and guidance during classroom discussions, assisting students in promptly rectifying errors and enhancing learning efficacy. Homework assignments and practical tasks post-class can also serve as part of the evaluation, allowing teachers to gain a deeper understanding of students' learning situations and issues encountered, thereby further optimizing teaching methodologies and content. This continuous feedback mechanism can stimulate students' learning motivation, enabling them to perceive their growth at each step. Internships and case analyses within enterprises are also integral components of the evaluation system. The manner in which students perform during internships and whether they can apply their acquired knowledge to real-world work situations are crucial evaluation indicators. Feedback from industry professionals not only aids students in understanding their actual capabilities but also furnishes educators with invaluable references. Based on such feedback, educators can adjust course content and teaching methods, ensuring that instruction aligns more closely with practical demands. A diversified evaluation system should also emphasize self-assessments and peer evaluations. Through self-reflection, students can understand their strengths and weaknesses, formulating more effective learning plans. Peer

evaluations facilitate mutual learning and exchange among students, cultivating their cooperative spirit and communicative abilities.

#### **4. Implementation Strategies of Business English Teaching Model in Undergraduate Colleges and Universities**

##### *4.1 Enhancement of Top-level Design and Institutional Safeguards*

The top-level design must originate at the institutional level, clearly defining the objectives and direction of educational reform, and establishing a systematic and scientifically grounded reform plan. This is not merely a technical endeavor but also requires a long-term perspective and resolute determination. School leaders and educational administrators should recognize that business English education is not merely about language instruction but also about cultivating comprehensive qualities and practical abilities. To this end, schools should establish a dedicated reform steering committee responsible for overall planning and coordination. This committee should extensively solicit input from teachers, students, and industry experts to ensure the feasibility and forward-looking nature of the reform plan. Institutional safeguards are embodied in specific policies and measures. Schools need to enact a series of policies supportive of the reform, such as teacher training, curriculum design, and resource allocation, to ensure that teachers can effectively implement new teaching models and students can benefit from a superior learning experience under the protection of these systems. For instance, regular teacher training sessions should be organized, including participation in domestic and international educational workshops, to enhance their teaching proficiency and innovative capabilities. Additionally, schools should institute a robust evaluation mechanism to promptly assess the impact of the reforms and continually refine and optimize the plans. Only in this way can a learning-outcome-oriented pedagogical model be truly realized, nurturing business English talents with international perspectives and practical abilities. This is a comprehensive project that requires the collective effort and support of the entire institution, only through the dual propulsion of institutional safeguards and top-level design can the reform achieve its intended outcomes and pave a broader path for students' futures (Guo, 2024).

##### *4.2 Strengthening of Faculty Development and Enhancement of Teachers' Professional Competence*

Teachers serve as the cornerstone of education, as their professional expertise and teaching fervor directly influence the learning outcomes and interests of students. Beyond merely being purveyors of language, educators ought to be guides and motivators for their pupils. Schools should organize regular participation in domestic and international research and training activities for teachers, enabling them to stay abreast of the latest educational philosophies and teaching methodologies, fostering peer exchange and experience sharing, and stimulating innovative thinking. Teachers should have access to practical business cases and industry trends, in order to better integrate theory with practice in the classroom, allowing students to perceive the practicality and significance of business English. Schools can also invite industry experts to conduct lectures or courses, providing teachers with more practical

opportunities and resources, thereby enhancing their teaching effectiveness. In addition to professional training, schools should establish an incentive mechanism to honor those teachers who have made outstanding contributions to educational reforms, encouraging them to continue exploring and innovating. A dynamic and forward-thinking teaching team is pivotal to educational success. Thus, school administrators and educational leaders should afford teachers ample trust and support, creating a favorable working environment and growth space for them. Only then can teachers fully unlock their potential in teaching, significantly contributing to the growth and success of students.

#### *4.3 Intensification of University-Industry Collaboration and Joint Establishment of Practical Teaching Platforms*

Companies are not merely future employers; they are invaluable resources for students in honing their practical skills. Educational institutions should proactively forge deep collaborative relationships with enterprises, jointly developing practical courses and projects. For instance, partnerships can be established with foreign trade firms, multinational corporations, and various business organizations, involving the arrangement of regular student internships or visits to these enterprises. Within the actual business context, students can gain a deeper understanding of the practical applications of theoretical knowledge and cultivate their abilities to address real-world challenges. Such cooperation is not merely a superficial exchange; it demands genuine commitment and communication from both parties. Schools ought to regularly invite industry experts from enterprises to participate in curriculum design and teaching evaluations to ensure that the educational content aligns with industry needs. The involvement of these experts not only provides valuable insights into the field but also aids students in developing a sense of professionalism and career planning. Through collaborations with enterprises, instructors can also continuously update their knowledge base, enhancing the practicality and relevance of their teaching. The establishment of a platform for practical teaching requires robust management mechanisms. Schools should set up dedicated departments responsible for coordinating and organizing various practical projects. These might include hosting regular business simulation competitions, case analysis activities, and the like, to improve students' proficiency in areas such as business communication, negotiation, and report writing. This model of school-enterprise cooperation not only provides students with a genuine learning environment but also augments their competitiveness in the future job market, instilling a greater sense of accomplishment and self-confidence in their educational journey. Education should not be confined to textbooks; it should extend into society, penetrate enterprises, and be integrated with real-world needs (Ting & Mengqi, 2024).

#### *4.4 Advancement of Informationization Development and Promotion of Educational Resource Sharing*

In an era characterized by the overwhelming deluge of information, the availability of exemplary educational resources and advanced pedagogical technologies constitutes pivotal means to enhance the quality of education. Institutions of learning should harness contemporary information technologies to construct an integrated information platform that encompasses teaching, learning, and communication in one seamless entity. This platform not only offers an extensive array of online courses and learning

materials but also enables real-time interaction between educators and students. Scholars can access these resources at any time and from any location, thereby meeting personalized learning needs. Similarly, instructors can leverage this platform for instructional design and evaluation, thereby refining teaching efficacy and outcomes. For instance, it would be beneficial to establish an online business English question bank that encompasses case analyses and practical application problems across various domains, fostering continuous reinforcement and advancement of students' linguistic proficiencies through practical engagement. The thrust towards informatization extends beyond mere hardware infrastructures; it necessitates a concurrent elevation of educators' proficiency in applying information technologies (Guangfen, 2024). Periodic IT training sessions could be organized to equip teachers with the latest instructional tools and methodologies, enabling them to maximize the integration of information technology in their pedagogical practices. Facilities such as multimedia classrooms and intelligent teaching systems should be fully utilized to craft a more dynamic and engaging learning milieu for students. The progressive development of informatization not only bolsters the quality of instruction and the efficacy of learning but also expands opportunities for exchange between scholars and educators, transforming the traditional unilateral process of instruction into a platform of bidirectional interaction and mutual growth. Education ought to be open and communal, and the implementation of informatization stands as a crucial pathway towards achieving this vision. Educational institutions and administrators should embrace an open-minded stance and actively accede to the wave of informatization, infusing fresh dynamism into the innovation and evolution of business English instruction (Yanling, 2019).

## 5. Conclusion

Reforming the business English teaching model in applied undergraduate institutions is an intricate and formidable task that necessitates collective efforts from all parties involved. The refocusing of training objectives, guided by vocational demands, should be aimed at establishing clear, measurable learning outcomes to ensure the accuracy of instructional direction. The optimization of the curriculum framework should entail designing modular and project-based instructional content, thereby enhancing the practicality and specificity of teaching. The reform of pedagogical methodologies should embrace student-centered, diversified approaches to stimulate students' interest and initiative in learning. The refinement of assessment systems should construct a diversified evaluation mechanism, providing a comprehensive evaluation of students' practical abilities and holistic qualities. These reform measures not only address the shortcomings of traditional teaching models but also provide solid guarantees for students' future career development. Future educational reforms will continue to revolve around these core elements, creating more opportunities for practice and propelling business English education to new heights.

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